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MY EXPERIENCES IN THE YUKON

BY: GEORGE WASHINGTON CARMACK.

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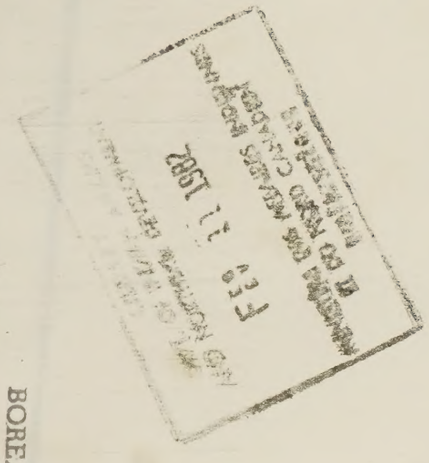

This pamphlet purporting to be written by Marguerite Carmack , the wife of the late George W.Carmack, does not read true to me, nor does it agree in its statements in many - even most important particulars with the accepted historical facts told and written by many honest and well-informed residents of the vicinity of Dawson and Forty-Mile at the period mentioned. It has always been most generally affirmed by those best qualified to know the facts that "Kate",- George's common-in-law Tagish Indian wife at the time of the discovery of the gold on the Klondike creeks by George W.Carmack, was with the party at the mouth of the Klondike river when George,Jim, and Charley, the first her husband or paramour, and the two latter her family relatives, were there, and I never heard of "Patsy" until this pamphlet met my eye. I greatly fear that the pamphlet is the result of a brain storm by a jealous woman, who married George for his money and the credit she sought by the alliance with a man who was not the equal in honor to "Kate" an Indian woman who kept him warm and well fed during many a cold Yukon storm. I do not believe Carmack wrote this pamphlet.

Juneau,Alaska,
Oct.25,1936.

James Wickersham

James Wickersham.

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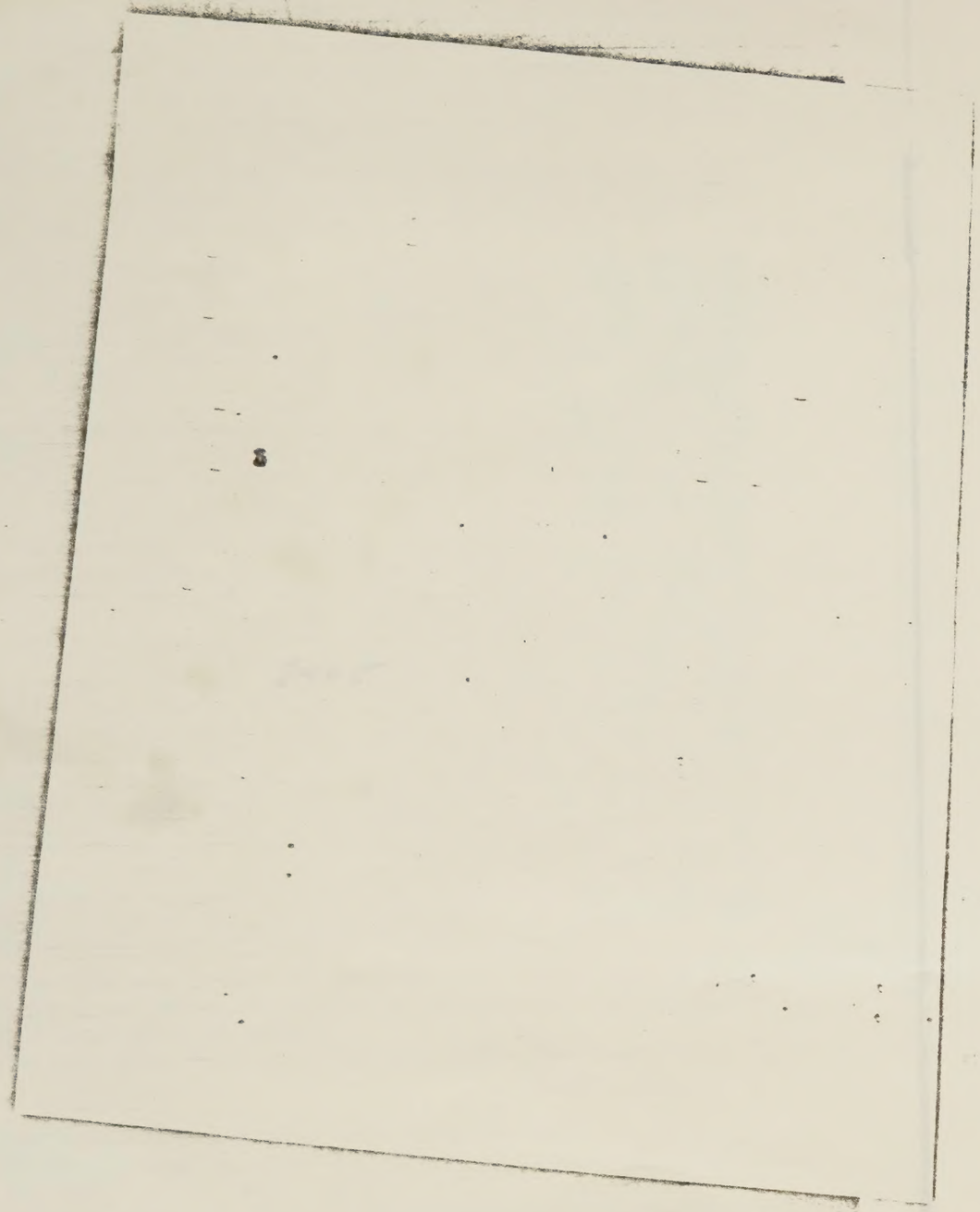
By Marguerite P. Carmack



FOREWORD

IN publishing this book, I do so to comply with the last wish of my late husband, George Washington Carmack. It was his desire to place before the public the true story of the discovery of the Klondike.

So many erroneous stories have been told regarding the same that I feel that I am not only doing justice to my late husband but to the public in general, so that they may know, as he did, the truth of the discovery by the one who was the real discoverer.

Faithfully yours,
MARGUERITE CARMACK.

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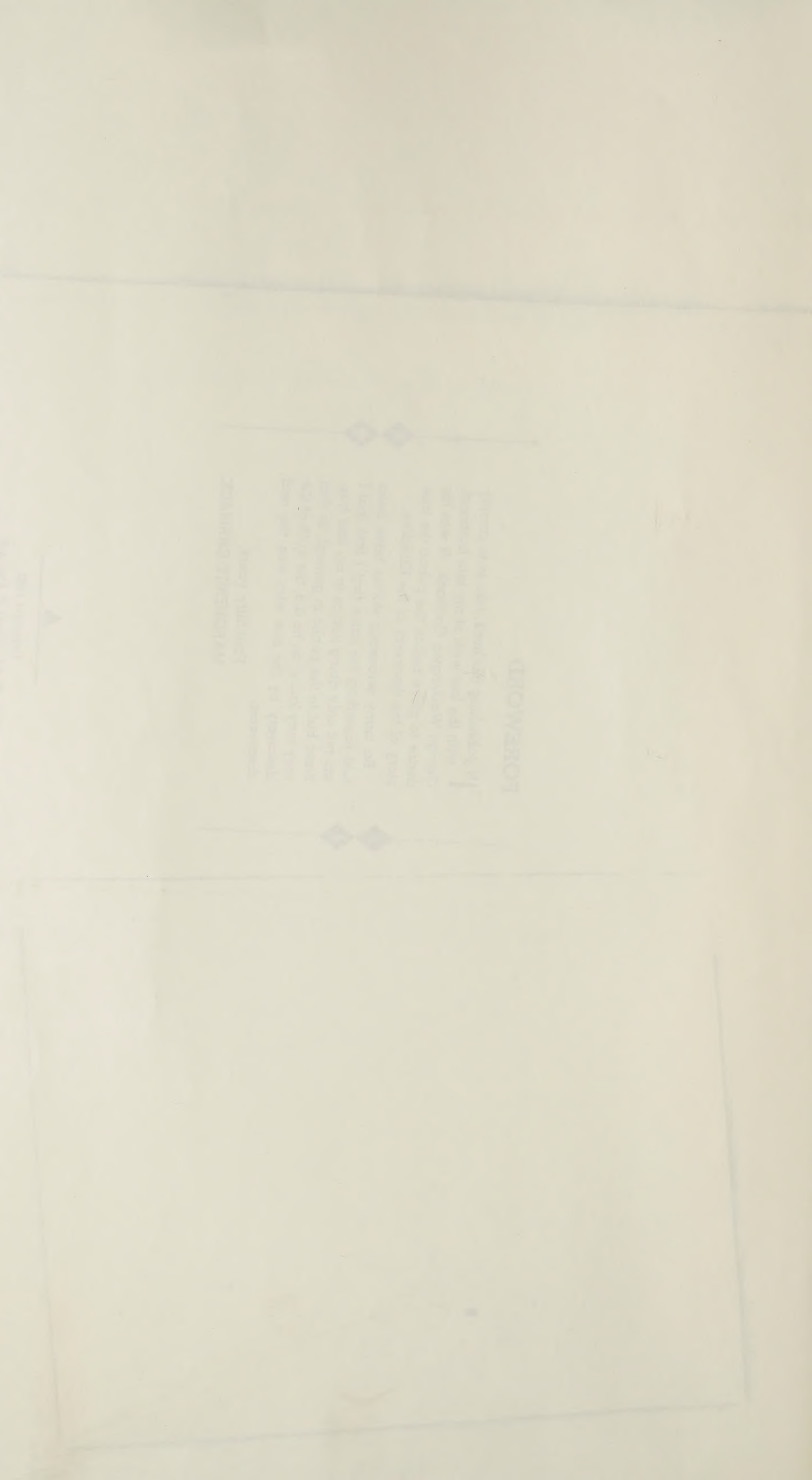
By Marguerite P. Carmack



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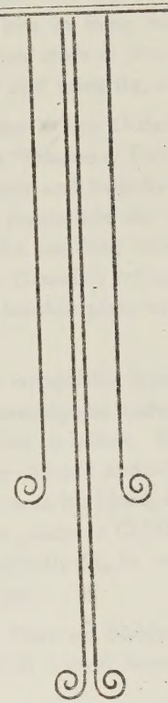
My Experiences in the Yukon

By GEORGE W. CARMACK



INTRODUCTION

My object in giving this bit of Yukon history to the public, is for the purpose of correcting the erroneous statements made in some of the magazines and newspapers of the country regarding my discovery of gold in the Klondike. Some of the disgruntled men who had come into the country too late to stake a claim in the Klondike district, were mostly responsible for these statements.

The following is an extract from one of the scurrilous articles written about me. I quote from the "Engineering and Mining Journal" of September 6th, 1919—an article written by Henry Boursin of Ozone, N. Y.

"By HENRY BOURSIN

Ozone Park, N. Y.

"As a discoverer, George Carmack has a record that is absolutely unique—it probably never will be beaten: For five years he camped every summer where the very spot occupied by his tent was underlaid by some of the richest gold gravel ever found. Following his 'discovery' other men found gold in plain sight on the bare bedrock of Big Skookum Gulch, about 1,000 feet from his camp. At about the same distance, on No. 2 above Carmack's Discovery claim, three pans of gravel, averaging $1,100 to the pan, were taken from a depth of one foot below the surface. Gold Hill, also but a few hundred feet distant from his camp ground, had a string of claims avieraging $500,000 to the claim. Year after year he camped on and walked over gold galore without the shadow of a suspicion crossing his mind that the country was worth a tinker's dam except for moose meat.

"It is probable that gold would have been found in the Klondike region years before 1895 but for the presence of Carmack there. It works out thus: The district was known for years to all Yukoners as his hunting ground; and, although he was not a prospector, it would seem inconceivable that anyone could camp and roam in a gold country for years and never see a sign—this in a land where every man and woman was supposed to be a bit of a prospector and the very babes played at mining. To most men it would appear as if there were too many impossibilities to consider that one. Again: By the time two men poled store-grub up a river or two, then packed or sleighed it over a divide or two, the cost of that grub-pile in money and hardship was such that its use as food might almost be classed as a luxury. In fact a man and his dog-team would devour $1,000 yearly. Consequently, what game and fish he could get was a matter for serious consideration, for under the most favorable circumstances he could cut 75 per cent from the cost of his provender. Therefore not only was the Carmack presence in the "moose pasture" regarded as conclusive evidence that it contained no rich diggings, but his business there was distinctly harmful from the prospector's point of view, for by every moose he killed the probability of a prospector going there was thereby lessened."

"The Man from Ozone," who wrote the above article, seems to know as little about prospecting conditions in the Yukon between 1890 and 1897 as he knows about telling the truth.

The early Yukon Pioneers will bear me out in this statement.

G. W. CARMACK.

I append the following affidavit, which speaks for itself:

"I solemnly swear that I never set foot in the Klondike previously to July 1st, 1896."

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARMACK.

Resolution Offered by Seattle Lodge No. 2, Yukon Order of Pioneers

WHEREAS, It has come to the knowledge of this Lodge that certain scurrilous articles, written by certain newspapers and magazines, have been circulated for the purpose of creating doubts as to Brother George W. Carmack's credibility,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the members of Seattle Lodge No. 2, Yukon Order of Pioneers, who knew him in those early and strenuous days of the Yukon, and who have associated with him more or less ever since that time, do hereby endorse him as a man of truth, honesty and integrity, and

WHEREAS, The Grand Lodge of the Yukon Order of Pioneers at Dawson, Y. T., has set aside the 17th day of August as "Discovery Day" in honor of Brother Carmack—a day that is celebrated with banquets and balls by every lodge of pioneers in the North and Northwest. We strive to perpetuate the memory of that day when the civilized world was electrified with the startling news that Geo. W. Carmack had found the combination to the lock on Canada's refrigerator, with the hope that that day (August 17th) may stimuate his brother pioneers in further efforts for the good of our wonderful Northland.

Geo. Carmack may never receive recognition from the Canadian government for the days and years of nerve-racking hardships he endured in order that the trail might be made smooth and easy for civilization to follow. But Carmack is not a quitter. He is the type of pioneer who moves ever onward and allows no obstacle to bar his way. It is his nature to be a pathfinder. It is in his blood, inherited from his pioneer father and mother, with whom he crossed the plains to California in an ox team when he was a child. Plucky, self-reliant and physically fit, he would be an asset to any frontier country in which he elects to cast his lot.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we highly endorse Brother George Washington Carmack and recommend him as a loyal American citizen and very much of a man.

Dated May 2nd, 1922.

F. E. KNOWLES.

A. W. ARNAUD, *President*,

D. H. McDONALD, *Secretary*.

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YUKON HISTORY

One very early morning in the latter part of May, 1896, I was sitting on the bank of the river at Fort Selkirk. The sky above the Eastern rim of the Palisades was glowing with a soft light, presaging the birth of a new day. Over the Palisades the morning star was drowsily blinking and falling to sleep, as I gazed with wonder and awe on God's miracle of dissolving night into day.

I do not believe that God ever reproduces this glorious sight outside of the Yukon Valley. As I watched the flaming banners thrust forth their streamers of scintillating fire above the mountains, I felt my blood begin to tingle with new life and strength. I had a premonition that something unusual was going to take place in my life.

Right then and there I made up my mind to take action on that hunch at once, so, taking a silver dollar out of my pocket (that was all the cheechaco money I had), I flipped it high into the air. It was to be heads up the river and tails down the river, to test whatever fate had immediately loaded up my boat, got into the stern with the paddle, and was off, down the river. It came down tails. I in store for me. When I arrived at Fortymile, I was still undecided what course to pursue.

That night I had a very vivid dream. I dreamed that I was sitting on the bank of a small stream of water, watching the grayling shoot the rapids. Suddenly the grayling began to scatter and two very large King salmon shot up the stream in a flurry of foaming water and came to a dead stop in front of the bank where I was sitting. They were two beautiful fish, but I noticed that instead of having scales like salmon, they were covered with an armour of bright gold nuggets, and had $20 gold pieces for eyes. As I reached out my hand to grasp one of the fish, I awoke with a death grip on my right ear, the pain of which must have awakened me so suddenly.

This dream took such a hold on my imagination that I slept no more that night. As I lay there in my blankets thinking, thinking, thinking, I finally came to the conclusion that the interpretation of my dream was that I must go fishing for salmon; so, as there was a good market for dried salmon along the river that year, I made up my mind to go fishing.

The awesome silence of the vast spaces of the North has a tendency towards breeding superstition in a man's soul; especially if he has lived much alone in the wild places, as I have. I confess that this dream appealed so greatly to my superstition that a new gold discovery right here in Forty-mile would not tempt me to forego by determination to go salmon fishing.

In the morning, after eating my breakfast, I went to the store, bought some net twine and started to make a large gill-net. In the meantime I was trying to make up my mind what stream to locate on. I was fairly well posted on the various streams that empty into the Yukon, having hunted and prospected on most of them.

When my net was finished I had decided on my choice for a fishing ground. About fifty miles up the river, a small stream, known as the Klondike River, cuts its way through the right bank of the Yukon. It was known as one of the best salmon streams on the Yukon, and that was to be my destination.

On the first day of July, I loaded my boat and started up the river for the Klondike. A man by the name of Cooper, who was going to do some assessment work on a quartz claim opposite the mouth of the Klondike, accompanied me on the trip up the river.

As soon as I arrived at the Klondike, I built a good fish trap and put it into the river, after which I built frames to dry the fish on. By the time I had everything ready the fish began to run.

About every four years there is a poor run of salmon along the Yukon and its tributaries. Salmon fishing proved a failure that year; in fact, I had never seen a poorer run of fish in the North, but I had so much faith in my dream that I stayed, hoping that the run would increase shortly.

One day in the latter part of July, as I was in the act of taking a large salmon out of the trap, I saw three Indians coming toward my camp. As they came closer the one in the lead raised his hand and shouted, "Kla-how-ya George." I answered the salutation, and at the same time I recognized two of them. They were old Indian friends whom I had not seen for seven years.

After shaking hands, I asked them what brought them so far down the river. They said they had had nothing but bad luck since I left the upper river, and their medicine told them to hunt me up and they would have good luck.

The tallest of the three Indians was known as Skookum Jim, on the upper river. He was a Tagish Indian, a brother of the Tagish chief. He had the pure strain of the full-blooded Indian, high cheek bones, hawk-like nose, and large, piercing black eyes, well nearly six feet in height, as straight as a gun barrel, powerfully built, with strong sloping shoulders, tapering from the shoulders downward to the waist, like a keystone. He was known as the best hunter and trapper on the river; in fact, he was a super-specimen of the Northern Indian.

Tagish Charley was also a fine specimen of the Northern Indian, lean and lithe as a panther, keen in his perception, and as alert as a weasel, the type of a man to tie to in a case of emergency.

These two Indians came into my life in a way I can never forget. Ten years before, when I was packing over the Chilcoot Pass, I got acquainted with Skookum Jim, who was also packing over the same trail. I was very much impressed with his sturdy, independent nature. Altho of a taciturn disposition, he never refused to give me information about the country when I asked for it, and occasionally a piece of sound advice that has helped me wonderfully to battle the hardships of the North. One day, after climbing from the "Stone House" for over two hours with hundred pound packs on our backs, we finally reached the apex of the Chilcoot Pass, where we took off our packs and rested. It was a very warm day and the sun was blazing; a light Northwest wind began to filter across the summit, cooling the heat waves in its course. The weird hush, the scintillations of the ice crystals on the surrounding glaciers, the towering giants of embattled rocks, thrusting up their hoary heads toward the dome of Heaven, gave one a feeling of intense awe.

It was an impressive sight. The black slate saw-tooth range, dividing Lake Bennett and Lake Atlin, stood out in bold relief; the sentinel hills that stood guard around the lakes, appeared close enough to be the foot-hills of the mountain on which we sat.

Suddenly Skookum Jim arose and stood looking toward the hills, with steady eyes. His head was bare and his shirt was unbuttoned at the throat, exposing his great chest and neck of bronze. There was something in his attitude which suggested the silent strength of the North. With a graceful wave of his hand over the scene that lay below us, he said, "Dis Inchen country. Hi-yu skookum illahee; hi-yu clean, all same sky." The sentiment expressed in Skookum Jim's remark brought to me a feeling of admiration for his rugged, stalwart character. I then and there determined to cast my lot with these two Indians in a prospecting trip on the Yukon, if I could induce them to join me in a venture of that kind. The result was that two years later Skookum Jim, Tagish Charley and myself prospected on the Big Salmon River, and on the Hootalinqua, and they both proved themselves fairly good prospectors. Jim was a whale with a rocker, while Charley could handle a pick and shovel as well as a white man. There wasn't a lazy bone in either of their bodies.

I knew that my fishing venture was a failure, and I was getting pretty close to bed-rock; something had to be done at once, so I called a council, and we talked the situation over. We finally decided to go prospecting up the Klondike River.

As none of us had ever been up the Klondike before it was decided that Jim and I should take a small pack apiece and go up the river a few miles until we could find some high elevation from which we could get a good vie wof the surrounding country, in order that we

might be enabled to map out a good route of travel.

About the first of August, the most of my fish having been dried and cached, Jim and I shouldered our packs and started up the Klondike, leaving Tagish Charley and his brother Patsy at the camp until our return.

We traveled up the north bank of the Klondike for a number of miles, until we ascended a very high butte. When we got to the top, we both took off our packs and sat down to take a rest and get our breath. As I gazed at the surrounding country I sat like one fascinated; the beauty of the scene moved me deeply. What a marvelous sight; no wonder we pioneers love the Northland. Below, and far in the distance, I saw the low hills rolling and undulating in great windrows of living colors; the tops of the bald hills seemed to be painted in bands and stripes of green, yellow and red, showing that that were highly mineralized. Far back in the blue distance, close to the sky, towered the huge battlements of the Rockies, as though acting as a bulwark for the protection of their offspring.

Off toward the southeast I could see a low range of rolling hills, that looked as though they had been well worn by glacial action. I noticed that there was a very deep depression in the range, which I knew must be a large creek, heading off to the eastward. I made up my mind at once that we would do our prospecting in that part of the country. The whole region looked to me like an ideal country for placer deposits. There seemed to be nothing lacking geologically in the way of formation or glacial erosion. It is aptly described in the Canadian Geological Report as follows:

The Klondike region is a typical example of the thoroughly dissected upland. It forms part of the Yukon plateau, and subsequently deeply trenched by a number of small streams tributary to the main river courses. In comparatively recent times, a second elevatory movement has taken place, resulting in a further deepening of the valleys of from five hundred to seven hundred feet.

Portions of the old valley bottoms, still covered with heavy accumulations of gravel, occur at many points, forming terraces of varying width, bordering the newer valleys. Viewed from a distance, the Klondike district has a hilly, even a mountainous aspect, but in reality consists of a series of long branching ridges, the summits of which have been curved irregularly, into hill and hollow, by unequal denudation.

"Most of the ridges originate at or near the Dome, the topographic center of the district, and the highest eminence in it. The Dome is situated nineteen miles southeast of Dawson, about midway between Indian River and the Klondike. It has a height of about four thousand two hundred and fifty feet above the sea, three thousand and fifty feet above the Yukon at Dawson and about five hundred feet above the ridges at the base."

I had seen a lot of schist wash at the mouth of the Klondike, similar to that which I had seen around Miller and Glacier Creeks. Everything certainly looked favorable, and I had a prominition that I was going to strike diggings somewhere in the neighborhood.

After eating something and resting up a little, we shouldered our packs and started for camp. We got back very late that night. In the morning we began making preparations for our prospecting trip. We built a cache to hold our provisions, including the dried salmon. We proposed to use this cache for a base of supplies, so we built it large enough to hold an added supply of provisions.

The day before we were to start our hike up the Klondike we saw a boat coming down the Yukon with one man in it. He landed close to my camp. As he drew the bow of his boat up onto the beach he turned around and I recognized Bob Henderson, a man I had known for a year or two.

"Hello, Bob! Where in the world did you drop from and where do you think you are going?"

"I just came down from Ogilvie and I am going up the Klondike."

"What's the idea, Bob, going hunting, fishing, or prospecting?"

"No, there has been a prospect found in a small creek that heads up against the Dome. I think it empties into the

Klondike, about fifteen miles up, and I am looking for a better way to get there, than going over the mountains from Indian River."

"Got any kind of a prospect?"

"We don't know yet, we can get a prospect on the surface. When I left the boys were running up an open cut to get to the bed-rock."

"What are the chances to locate up there, everything staked?"

Henderson looked up at the two Indians, who were standing near, and said, "Well, there's a chance for you George, but I don't want any damn Siwashes staking on that creek." With that peevish remark he pushed his boat into the water and left. Jim and Charley heard and understood every word that was said, and they were certainly two very angry Indians.

"Wats matter dat white man?" Jim asked. "Him killet Inchen moose, Inchen caribou, ketchet gold Inchen country, no liket Inchen staket claim, wha fo, no good."

"Never mind, Jim. This is a big country, we need not bother our heads about Bob Henderson, or his creek. We'll go and find a creek of our own. You know the country we were looking at the other day. Well, tomorrow we're going there."

The next morning at daylight we each took a small pack of provisions, a shovel and a pan, put them in the boat, and poled up the Klondike about two miles. We landed in a little back-water slough on the left bank, secured the boat and shouldered our packs. The golden banners of the rising sun were heralding the advent of day in the east. A light breeze brought the pungent smell of the spruce forests down the long sloping ridges of the Klondike Valley; the fragrance of the scent was like an elixir; it brought vigor and new life to my body. The coolness of the Northern dawn, with its mysterious silence, brought to my soul a new feeling of reverence for the Creator of this wonderful Northland. Before me lay God's open book of nature. In it I could read a beautiful description of mountains, valleys, trees and rippling streams. While I was gazing in wonder upon the picture that lay spread out before me, and wondering how soon I might overtake Dame Fortune hiding in one of the depressions of these hills, my thoughts were interrupted by Jim's foggy voice, asking, "Wer you go now?"

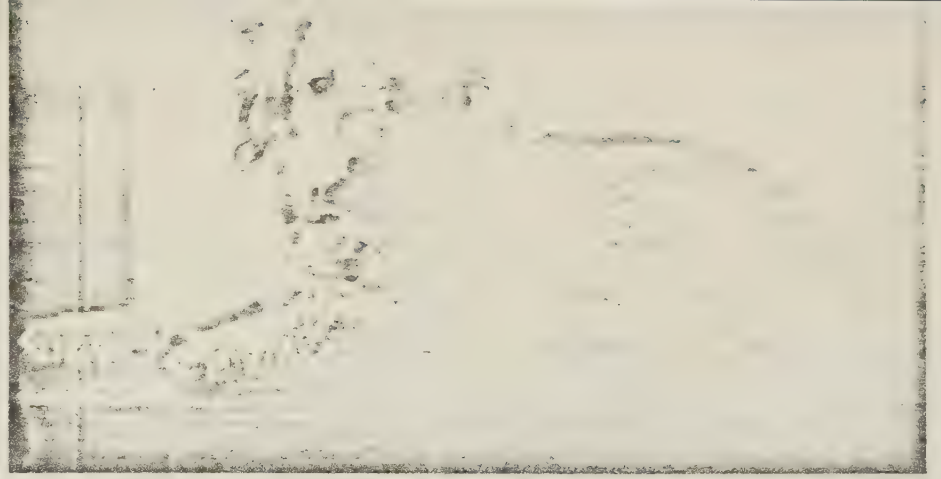
As a rule, when in a country where there were no trails, I let the Indians take the lead, but I had a presentiment that I was going to strike diggings that day and I was eager to be in the lead, so I said, "You come, I go first." So I struck off to the right, where I thought the creek out across the bottom through the timber, bearing off to the right, where I though the creek should be. After traveling a mile or so, we came out on the bank of the creek a beautiful stream of water about two or three sluice heads. The bed of the stream fairly glistened with white quartz wash, intermixed with schist; it certainly looked good, much better than Miller, Glacier, or any other creek I had ever seen in the Yukon Valley. I threw off my pack, took the shovel and pan and went over to the left bank, on a short bend of the creek, where a small bar had formed. I filled the pan with gravel and hunted up a still pool of water. I got down on my haunches and began tilting and twirling the pan in the water and occasionally stirring up the gravel with my hand. When I got it panned down to about a handful I stopped and looked at it, wondering whether a prospect would show up. Hamlet's soliloquy came into my mind, and I quoted aloud, "To be or not to be, that is the question." Both of the Indians were looking over my shoulder. There was a strained expectancy in their lean, brown faces, that showed the importance of the result. Charley, with an inquiring expression on his face said. "Wa fo you talket dat cultus wa wa? I no see um gold." "That's all right, Charley, I makum Boston man's medicine." With that I began to pan again until there was only a couple of tablespoonsful of black sand left in the bottom of the pan. I raised the gold-pan up to the Indians and said, "Spit in it boys, for good luck." They complied, and I put the pan in the water and began gently to whirl and tilt one way until a streak of bright yellow gold

MY FIRST BUCKET OF PAY DIRT

George Carmack's Dog Pining Away for Its Master

With an expression of infinite melancholy and wistful sadness in his deep velvet brown eyes, Tarzan, the big Airedale dog, who was the constant companion of the late George W. Carmack, discover of the Klondike, constantly watches for the master that will never return.

Since his master's death, which occurred at Roycroft Hospital just over two weeks ago, the faithful animal has never given up the hope that some day he will return, and every day passersby can see him searching the streets, or watching from the window of his mistress''s automobile, ready to welcome his master home.



TARZAN CANNOT REALIZE THAT KLONDIKE PIONEER IS DEAD.

Tarzan is visibly pining away, and his woebegone demeanor is pathetic in the extreme, affecting all who see him. During the last two weeks he has taken no interest in his former pursuits and it is only with difficutly that Mrs. Carmack has been able to persuade him to take food. When taken to the studio to have his photograph taken, it was found impossible to make him stand up long enough to get an exposure. It was only when the photographer imitated the sound of a cat from behind the camera, that a momentary expression of interest flickered across his face, and the picture was obtained. Immediately after this, he lay down again on the table, his face between his paws and his eyes gazing moodily into space.

Tarzan is just two years of age, and is a combination of Airedale and sheep dog. He was born in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, California, 7,000 feet above sea level, and was the property of a mountain ranger, named Green. Carmack bought him when he was three weeks old.

The dog accompanied his master on all his journeys, riding beside him on the driver's seat. As a hunting dog he has proved invaluable, especially for trailing bear and deer, and is an excellent fighter. While at Carmack's mines in California he used to call his master and mistress regularly at 8 a. m. and remain in the room until they got up.

Tarzan had many traits of which a human being would have been proud. He was practically a reader of human nature, he seemed to know instinctively whether a person was genuine or not. If he decided you were not, he had no use for you, and no matter how you tried, you could never make a friend of him. If, on the other hand, he decided you were genuine, you could find no truer friend or companion than he. Although he lived for several years after the death of his master, he never was the same Tarzan of old. But you only had to call out George Carmacks name to see his ears stand up and the look of hope come into his eyes, ever hopeful, ever watchful for the return of his master.

CARMACK'S DISCOVERY ON BONANZA—August 17, 1896

CARMACK'S DISCOVERY ON BONANZA—August 17, 1896

heavy, and easy to save in the pan.

Oh! but that sight brought on a "Grand and glorious feelin." If there was that much gold on the surface in this flat part of the creek, what must it be further up!

Once more we shouldered our packs and "hiked" for the upper valley. I do not know how my Indian companions felt, but as for myself, I know my pack felt lighter, the sun shone brighter, the birds sang louder and sweeter, and the very moss under my feet seemed to be a magic carpet, transporting me up a valley of golden dreams.

After traveling for about an hour we stopped at a high point on the left bank, where it looked favorable for rimrock to show up. Digging into the bank I struck some broken up bed-rock. I got about a shovel full and panned it down. The result was a few cents in fine gold and two coarse pieces about the size of a BB shot. This was a very fine prospect and Skookum Jim thought we ought to locate right here, but we had only washed half of a pan of dirt and no one could tell what lay below the surface without digging for it. At the best, prospecting in the North is only a gamble in which a man stakes the utmost limit of his labor and strength, and often his life, on the chance of finding a prospect that might not pay.

We talked the matter over and came to the conclusion to go further up the creek, and if we found nothing better, we could always come back here and locate. The point that we were now on was afterwards sixty below discovery. Once again we shouldered our packs and "mushed" up the creek about a mile and camped for the night.

The next morning we went on up the creek panning here and there, getting a little gold in every pan. We passed one branch coming in from the south which we did not stop to prospect, but went up the other fork, which was afterwards called Eldorado, and turned out to be the richest creek ever found in the Yukon Territory. On this creek we also found good prospects.

After going up this creek a couple of miles I found the remains of an old campfire which had evidently been made by white men in the winter. Nor was I wrong; Joe Ladue told me afterwards that in the winter of 1884-85, while wintering at old Fort Reliance, he and some other men were up in that part of ihe country hunting moose. Little did they dream that winter night of the wealth that lay under the frozen ground they were sleeping on.

We continued on clear up to the head of this creek, coming out on top of the ridge. We then turned east, as I wanted to circle around to the head waters of the main creek and prospect all the way down. After traveling a short distance along the ridge, a small black bear jumped up out of the huckleberry bushes and sat up to take a look at the strange creatures that had disturbed his nap. I was in the lead and Jim right behind me. He had the only gun in the party, a .44 caliber Winchester. I stopped and Jim leveled the rifle over my shoulder and fired. After we got through skinning the bear we traveled on until we came to the Dome, a high bald hill which stood at the head of a series of small creeks that ran towards the Klondike and Indian Rivers. We went up the side of this hill a short distance to take a view of the surrounding country.

It was a glorious day. The valley bed lay like a beautiful Oriental rug, its rich colors tinted by the warm flood of golden light, projecting its rays into every nook and cranny, upon every living, tumbling, rushing stream coursing it way down the hillsides. The lower range of the hills on either side were crimson and purple and emerald green, all softened and blended into a maze-like tapestry. A great fringe of huckleberry and salmonberry bushes, interwoven with one another in luxurious profusion, marked the lines of the foothills.

From a small canyon just below us a wisp of pale smoke was rising, evidently from a camp fire which I at once concluded must be the camp of the Henderson party. "Well boys," I said, "we have got this far, let's go down and see what they've got." "No liket go," said Jim, "too much far, he heap tired, wa fo tellet dat man we catchet dat gold? No him damn business; dis man no liket for Inchen staket for dat claim, wa fo?" "Oh, come on Jim, don't be all same Noosk (a wolverine, which is a thief and a glutton). We have found more good country than we want. Have a good tum-tum, Jim, and come along down."

After a little more persuasion Jim finally capitulated and the three of us went down to the camp. There were four men there, Henderson, Swanson, Monson, and Dalton. "Hello George," said Henderson. "You found us at last, eh?" "Well, yes, it was accidental. We found some good prospects in a creek over on the other side of that range and seeing your camp from up on that mountain we came around out of our way to tell you about it." I then asked permission to try a few pans on their claim. He told me to go ahead, so I tried several pans of gravel, both on the surface and down in the cut, but I could not get as good a prospect as I got over on the other creek. I then showed him the prospect that I had saved and advised him to go back with me and locate, but he did not seem to be interested.

This was one time that opportunity knocked at the doors of four men and they would not open; none of these four men ever came out of the Klondike with a home stake.

As far as I ever heard, Henderson's claim never did show up over two or three cents to the pan. His childish, unreasoning prejudice would not even allow him to stake on the same creek with the despised "Siwashes" so his obstinacy lost him a fortune.

Why the Canadian Government warded a pension to Bob Henderson for making the first gold discovery in the Klondike district is a mystery to me, unless it was because he was a Canadian, and my name was "GEORGE WASHINGTON Carmack." Now, I have never claimed to be the original discoverer of gold in the Klondike. But on August 17, 1896, one of the most startling and far reaching events in the history of gold discoveries took place when I uncovered the frozen bosom of the Klondike and sent forth from Bonanza Creek the astounding cry: "One hundred dollars to the pan!"

That cry was heard clear across the continent, while the echo reverberated around the entire globe. This discovery poured into the exchequer of the Canadian Government such a huge sum in royalties from the gold taken out that it added materially to the prosperity of that country. It has also built large cities, established lines of transportation and traffic, opened the gates of the Northern Empire and peopled the vast and lonely land with a sturdy, energetic, preservering population. There is positive evidence that gold was discovered in the Klondike eight years before Henderson came into the Yukon Territory.

The following is an extract from a report made by Peter Nelson, at Forty Mile Creek on February 2, 1895:

"On the 22nd of May, 1886, John Nelson, Dan Sprague, Joe Ladue and myself formed a partnership for the purpose of prospecting the Klondike River. We took one Indian with us. When we got to Fort Reliance we packed from there across to the Klondike, a distance of about thirty-five miles. The weather was very hot and water scarce. We struck the Klondike about forty miles up.

'On our first day's travel up the Klondike, we stopped on a bar on the left-hand side of the river, late in the afternoon. The bar had a heavy growth of willows, and was composed of a coarse wash. We went to prospecting it and found it would go from twenty-five to thirty cents to the pan for about three inches from the surface. We did not consider it would pay us to stop, as it was a small bar. We found other light prospects at the mouth of several creeks coming down, but we did not consider it worth while, as we could make all the way from fifty to one hundred dollars a day on Stewart River, if we caught low water."

The above report of Peter Nelson is in the possession of Mr. Geo. T. Snow, who was at the time historian of the Yukon Pioneers.

Previous to that time a resolution had been passed in the Grand Lodge, authorizing Brother Geo. T. Snow to publish a history of the Yukon and its pioneers, and that all data handed to him by Brothers of the Order, must be verified

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by two or more pioneers. So the reader can easily understand that the above report must be authentic, and that I am entitled to some consideration from the Canadian Government.

After resting a few minutes we started back over the mountain. Climbing up the steep side of a mountain without a trail, and with a pack on your back, struggling over fallen trees, floundering through devil clubs and interlaced underbrush, is heart-breaking work and exacts the uttermost toil of your body. Well' a weakling has no business to play in that kind of a game.

After reaching the top of the ridge, we sat down and rested for a few minutes, and then climbed down the other side of the mountain until we reached a large flat, composed of swamp and niggerheads. A man to successfully cross a swamp on niggerheads, must possess three qualities, namely: concentration, alertness and perfect equilibrium, as a misstep or a slip from the swaying niggerheads would cause him to sink to his thighs in glacier ooze. We crossed on these niggerheads with packs on our backs and our hands free to use as "swatters" for the mosquitoes and knats that swarmed above our heads in great clouds. We got across without a casualty but our moccasins were wet and slimy, causing us to slip and slide on the rocks. We had several nasty falls but nothing serious happened. The head waters of all the creeks heading into the Dome are all more or less glacial moraine and niggerhead swamps.

Dr. Rowland has somewhere written that "It is strange how the greatest of man's evils, *gold*, should be hid in all parts of the earth's crust where natural conditions are the hardest for the human race, from the frozen scarp of the Alaskan littoral, through the arid dessert and in the pest holes of the tropic. It is as if the Almighty did not intend that we should have it, or, if so, at the cost of our lives and of our health."

The North hides her golden secrets more effectively than any other part of the earth.

We finally struck our creek at the head of the south fork, and followed it down to where the north fork came in. This branch, I followed up for about a quarter of a mile. I could not get any gold in either of these forks, but in the north fork, out of a pan full of gravel, I would get a third of a pan of ruby and black sand. There was very little water this far up, but there were a number of small pools along the creek which were swarming with grayling, so we did not go hungry.

After going a couple of miles further down the creek I began to get a little gold. Then I became more careful in my prospecting, following around each bend of the creek looking for bed-rock.

About half a mile below the fork of the creek that we had followed up before, as we were walking along a high bank on the right "limit," where the creek made a sharp bend to the right, we ran hard up against the hill. I was ahead about fifty feet up from the water's edge. I stopped and looked down the bank, and there I saw a long, narrow strip of bed-rock, about a hundred feet long and from ten to twelve feet wide. Now here was the very thing we were looking for! Waiting until my two companions caught up to me, I pointed down to the strip of bed-rock and said, "Look down there, boys. If this creek is good for anything at all, we surely ought to find gold down there."

Throwing off my pack, I walked down to the rim, and as soon as I reached it I stopped and looked down. My heart skipped a beat. After rubbing my eyes with the back of my hand to wipe away a misty film that enveloped the pupils, I reached down and picked up a nugget about the size of a dime. I put it between my teeth and bit at it like a newsboy who had found a quarter in the street. Looking up at my two companions who had discarded their packs and were sitting on the bank watching me, I held up the nugget between my thumb and forefinger and shouted, "Hi yu gold! bring down the pan and the shovel. Hi yak." Charley grabbed the pan and the shovel, started down on the run, tripped and fell, and would have rolled into the creek if I had not caught him. I took the shovel and dug up some of the loose bed-rock. In turning over some of the flat pieces, I could see the raw gold laying thick between the flaky slabs, like cheese sandwiches. Putting some of the broken bed-rock into the pan I washed it down and got about a quarter of an ounce in that pan, mostly coarse gold.

I walked back to the rim and set the gold-pan on the ground. Then as near as I can remember, three full grown men tried to see how big damn fools they could make of themselves. We did a war dance around that gold pan. It was a combination war dance, composed of a Scotch hornpipe, Indian fox trot, syncopated Irish jig and a sort of a Siwash Hula-Hula. Then we sat down to rest and smoke. After resting a few minutes I washed a few more pans and filled an empty shotgun cartridge shell full of coarse gold, after which we crossed the creek and made camp on the flat.

It was getting late and we were tired and hungry. For five days we had been traveling over niggerheads and dry muskegs, forcing our way through thick tangles of devil club, stunted birch and spruce thickets, getting very little rest or sleep.

After roasting some of our bear meat and making a pot of tea, we ate our supper. Then we sat around the fire and smoked our pipes. After the pipes were out the two Indians, sitting with their blankets over their shoulders, their lean, bronze features lit up by the bright, gleaming camp fire, began to chant a wild, weird song of praise to the Great Spirit.

They sang of the many journeys we had made together, over silent lakes and rivers, of the burning summers and freezing winters, the silent trails, the hunting of the moose and caribou, of our feasts and famines, and even of the weird shadows of the tall spruce trees around our camp fire, ending with a loud, gladsome burst of our Great Discovery. Then they rolled themselves in their blankets and were soon playing the tired man's duet.

The flames of the camp fire flickered, then went out. I sat gazing at the glowing bed of coals, thinking, memories of the eleven years of nerve-racking toil, floundering through deep snow drifts, crossing over dangerous glaciers, climbing over almost impassable mountain ranges, with a heartbreaking pack on my shoulders, forcing my way through miles of devil club, tangling through swamps, or flirting with death while surging through dangerous rapids

In all that eleven years of strenuous, unceasing battle with the unsubdued Northland, I had imbibed a grim optimism, which found expression in undertaking to accomplish things which seemed at the time almost impossible of achievement. At last my hopes were about to be realized. A grim determination entered my soul to hold on in spite of every obstacle, until the treasure chest I had unearthed lay unlocked before me. Already my brain was occupied with half-formed projects for the future. A trip around the world with a congenial companion. A beautiful home with well kept lawns, shrubbery and flowers. A sum invested in government bonds, the income of which would be sufficient to enable me to enjoy the good things of life in a decent way and keep me comfortable for the balance of my life.

I was getting sleepy, so I rolled into my blankets and lay looking at the scintillating stars, gleaming in the great arching dome of the unclouded Yukon sky. The Great Dipper, nearly overhead, circled through the vast expanse. A falling meteor flashed for an instant across the heavens, then disappeared, and then I fell into a dreamless sleep.

At the break of day we were up, eating our meager breakfast, and washed it down with a cup of coffee, without sugar or milk. Then, taking my hand ax, I went out into the center of the flat to a small spruce tree and blazed it on the up and down stream sides. With a pencil, I wrote on the up-stream side, this notice:

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

"I do, this day, locate and claim, by right of discovery, five hundred feet, running up stream from this notice. Located this 17th day of August, 1896.

"G. W. CARMACK."

Then taking a fifty-foot tape line, which I had in my pack, we measured off five hundred feet up stream, as a discovery claim, then five hundred feet more, as one above discovery, for Jim. Then going back, I measured off five hundred

feet for myself by right of location, then five hundred feet as two below discovery for Charley. Then going back to a tall birch tree, standing on the bank near the point of discovery, I cut off a section of bark and wrote on it these words: "I name this creek 'Bonanza.'" George Carmack." I fastened it to the discovery stake and left the pan and shovel beside it. We then shouldered our packs and "mushed" for the Klondike. After floundering through swamps, our bodies stuck full of devil club thorns, we finally emerged from the canyon feeling like human pin cushions.

That was a strenuous five-hour jaunt. We found our boat, got in and pushed out into the stream. We had gone only a short distance when we met four men wading up the stream, towing a loaded boat. We stopped and held our boat with pike poles. They were all fine, big, husky looking fellows; a healthy pink color glowed through the skin of their tanned and bearded faces. Their names were Dan McGillivery, Dave Edwards, Harry Waugh and Dave McKay.

"Hello, boys," I said. "Kind of wet traveling ain't it?"

"Well, it ain't so damn dry as it might be," one of them answered with a grin.

"Where do you think you're bound for?" I asked.

"Well, we've just come down from up river and heard at Oglevie that a prospect had been found on some creek between the Klondike and Indian Rivers, so we came around this way to have a look, see. Do you know anything about it?"

"Yes," I replied, "I left there three days ago."

"What do you think about it?" one of them asked.

"Well," I said slowly, looking at them with a grin on my face, "I don't like to be a knocker, but I don't think much of it, and I wouldn't advise you to go up there." At that, the healthy pink glow on their faces changed to a baby blue, with black trimmings. It was almost pathetic to see the disappointment in their faces. These men were of the stuff that makes real prospectors. They had given up some of the best years of their lives in trying to wrest a home stake from the frozen bosom of the North, and in spite of the bitterhardships it dealt them, they were still optimistic of success.

"Then you wouldn't advise us to go up there?" said McGillivary.

"No, because I've got something better for you." Then I sprang my surprise. I told them of my discovery and showed them the gold. Their eyes lit up and the whole expression of their faces changed. It was like the bright sunshine bursting out from behind a black cloud.

I then gave them full directions how and where to go. They started, and that old tow-line was soon as taut as the E string on a violin. We stood there for a minute, watching the boat go foaming up the stream. I felt as if I had just dealt myself a royal flush in the game of life, and the whole world was a jack-pot.

Soon after reaching my camp at the mouth of the Klondike, I saw two men in a small boat coming down the Yukon. They would have passed on by, but I hailed them and they paddled in to shore. They were two Canadian Frenchmen.

"Where are you boys bound for?" I asked.

"Oh, down the reever to Forty Mile or Circle City."

"If I were you boys I wouldn't go any further. Haven't you heard of the new strike?"

"Oh, yes, we know all about heem, I tink hees wan beeg bluff."

"How's this for a bluff?" I showed them the gold and told them of my discovery. 'You can put your outfit on my cache and leave your boat here. You can ford the Klondike at the mouth of Bonanza. That's what I've named the new creek." Then I directed them how to get there. They did not wait to hear any more. In a few minutes their boat was unloaded and their packs ready. They were soon mushing out across the flat, both talking at the same time, in French and English, and gesticulating with both hands. They were so excited they forgot to tie their boat, which would have floated away had I not secured it.

I then crossed the river to tell the news to Cooper. There was another man at his camp by the name of Monahan. They both left the next day for Bonanza.

Early the next morning I told Jim to take a pack of provisions, an ax and a small cross-cut saw which I had, and go back up to our claims, build a saw-pit and cut some logs. The McGillivery party had told me they had a whip-saw that I could use. Then taking Charley and his brother Patsy along with me I started for Forty Mile. As soon as I landed there, which was late in the afternoon, I went to the one saloon where I knew most of the miners who were in town would be congregated, and found quite a crowd there. Some of them had just come down Forty Mile, and some from Miller, Glacier and Davis Creeks. The most of them had just come down to the Post to place their orders for their winter's outfit. The majority of them were old friends of mine and some of them were pretty well lit up.

"Hello there, you d--nd old meat-eating Siwash, how's fishin'? Got any dried salmon to sell? If I don't get something to eat besides that d--n rank, yaller, petrified sow-belly purty soon, I'll sure be way-billed for hell."

"Say, Andy, if you don't quite swearing like that you'll never get through the Golden Gates." I said with a laugh.

"Well, I'll tell you George, if I could only get a home stake so I could go down to Seattle and get one more big feed of fresh spuds and a big dish of ham and eggs I wouldn't care a damn whether the gates I passed through were made of gold or asbestos."

I laughed heartily.

"What the hell are you laughing about? Do you think I have forgotten the taste of ham and eggs?"

Then some one shouted "Have a drink, George," and "Pass out the hootch, Bil," and other similar greetings, some of which would not look good in print. They were a rough bunch, rough in dress, rough in speech and rough handed, but just as great hearted and manly as they were rough. Real men, every one of them, with muscles and sinews like iron bands, developed by continuous and arduous exercise. There was no adventure too strenuous or dangerous for them to undertake. They possessed the kind of power and strength that make men invincible, with characters broadened and strengthened by the hardships and privations they had been forced to endure, in their unequal struggle with the mighty forces of Nature in the unknown and desolate wilds.

Every man who has wintered in the North, far from the sight or sound of civilization, dependent upon his own prowess for the very means of subsistence, develops a fellow feeling for every human being with whom he comes in contact. The Brotherhood of Man is no idle dream, but a reality in the Northland.

Well, we all had a drink, and that drink made me feel like another man, so the other man had to have a drink. After that last glass of hootch, the past thirty-six hours, with their manifold experiences, seemed distant and unreal, so right there I determined to "cut it out." After gathering my wits and taking a little time to get my breath, I turned my back to the bar, held up my hand and said, "Boys, I've got some good news to tell you. There's a big strike up the river."

"Strike! h–l," said a big, husky miner, seated at a nearby card table. "That ain't no news. That's just a scheme of Ladue and Harper to start a stampede up the river."

"That's where you're off, you big rabbit-eating malamute. Neither Ladue nor Harper knows anything about this." Then reaching for a blower near the gold scales on the bar, I dumped the cartridge shell full of gold into it and said, "Well, how does that look to you, eh?"

"It that some of Miller Creek gold that Ladue gave you?" asked my big friend, getting up and striding to the bar. Picking up the blower, he looked at the gold and slowly stirred it around with his big forefinger, then his mouth dropped open as though his lower jaw had been unjointed, and his voice sounded like a Stick Medicine Man with congested lungs, delivering an incantation.

"Holy Makuluk boys, this ain't no Miller Creek dust. I know the gold from every creek in this country and this ain't like none of them," and putting out his ham-like hand; he said: "Put 'er there, George. I've known you since '88, and I've never known you to lie to a white man or a Siwash, and I can lick any

hootch-guzzling, salmon-eating son-of-a-gun that says you lie now. But say, old man, if it ain't asking too much, where in h--l did you get it?"

"Well," I answered with a smile, "from the frozen condition of the country, I don't think I was anywhere near that place. But listen, boys, and I'll tell you." So they all gathered around me and I told them the story of my discovery.

THE BIG STAMPERE WAS ON.... But that's another story.

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARMACK.

Interim Receipt No 387
Placer Mining Location No on Gold Bottom
(at present No 11 below the old discovery)

Dominion Lands Office

Yukon Agency
14th Dec 1896

Received from Geo W Carmack of Klondike the sum of Fifteen Dollars being Entrance fee for Placer Mining Location.

No on Gold Bottom
(at present No 11 below discovery)

The Rights hereby granted are those laid down in the Dominion Mining Regulations and no more and are subject to all the Provisions of the said Regulations whether the same are expressed herein or not

C. Constantine
Jas. O'Brien Wells

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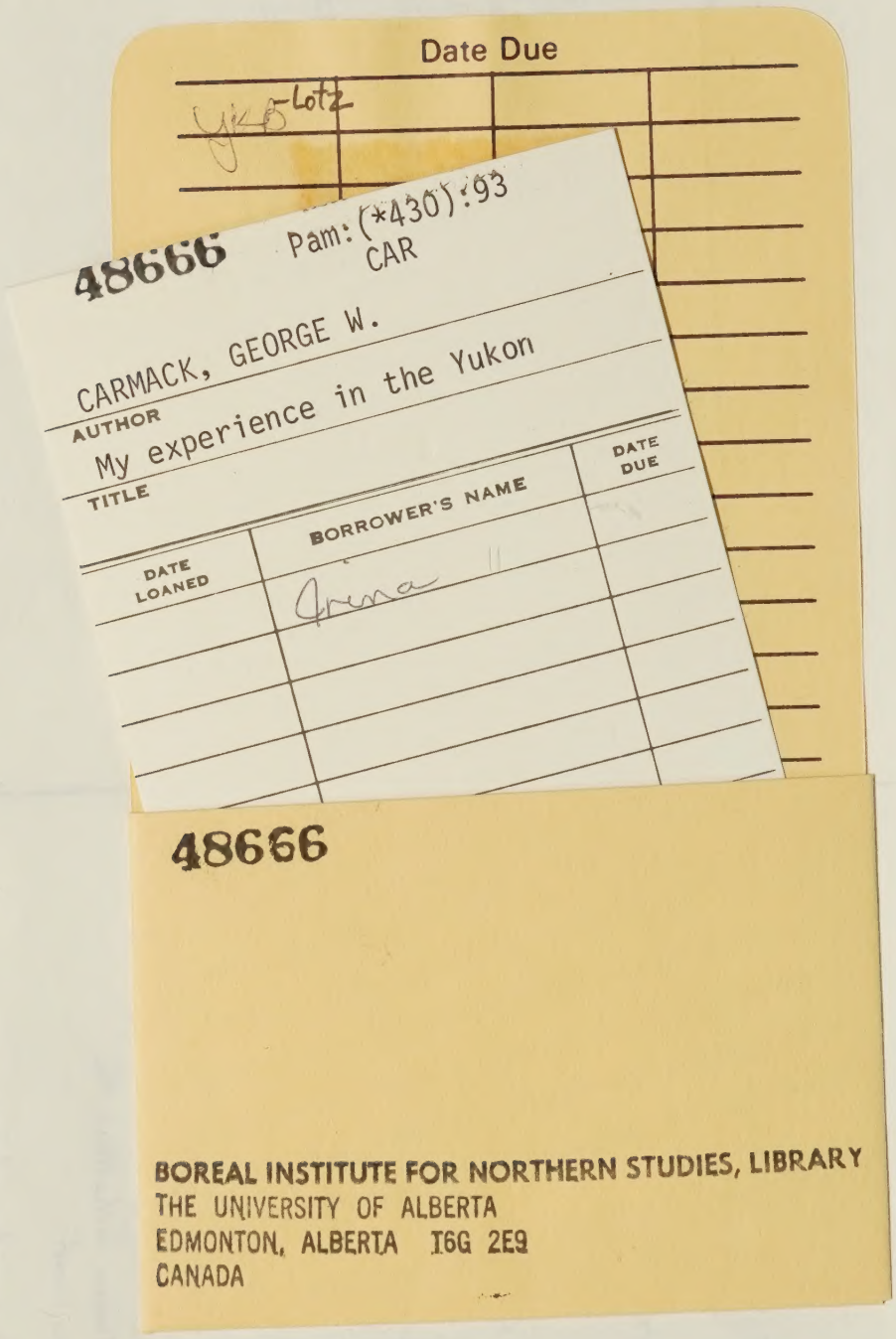
I am having prepared copy for another book on this subject that will go much more into detail, giving a full description of our lives and experiences. Fully illustrated.

MARGUERITE P. CARMACK.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